

Religious Fact-Checking

by John Isaac Edwards

In the April 7 edition of *The Dallas Morning News* it was reported that Google will offer “fact check” tags in its search results — the tech industry’s latest effort to combat false and misleading news stories. In Google’s main search engine or the Google News section will see a conclusion such as “mostly true” or “false” next to stories that have been fact checked. We need to do some **Religious Fact-Checking** as there is a lot of false and misleading information circulated in the religious world. Those of Berea did some fact-checking as they “...searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so” (Acts 17:11). John urged his first epistle recipients, “...try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world” (1 Jn. 4:1). 1 Thessalonians 5:21 teaches, “Prove all things; hold fast that which is good.” Let’s do some fact-checking of religious teachings.

1) **Original Sin.** It’s been said, “Adam and Eve, being the root of all mankind, the guilt of this sin was imputed, and the same death in and corrupted nature conveyed to all their posterity, descending from them by ordinary generation. From this original corruption, whereby we

are utterly indisposed, disabled, and made opposite to all good, and wholly inclined to all evil, do proceed all actual transgressions.” A little Scripture-searching will show this to be false information. The Preacher said, “Lo, this only have I found, that God hath made man upright; but they have sought out many inventions” (Eccl. 7:29). During the wilderness-wandering period, God did not hold children responsible for their father’s sins, “...which in that day had no knowledge between good and evil...” (Dt. 1:39). Ezekiel 18:20 records, “The soul that sinneth, it shall die. The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son...” Paul said, “...as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted...” (2 Cor. 11:3). Corruption is in the world through lust (2 Pet. 1:4). John spoke of “...the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life...” (1 Jn. 2:16). Sin is committed “...when lust hath conceived...” (Jas. 1:15). This occurred when “...the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat” (Gen. 3:6).

2) **Unconditional Predestination And Foreordination.** We are told, “God has predestined and foreordained some men and angels to everlasting life out of his free grace and love without any foresight of faith or works in man or perseverance in any of them, and others are foreordained to everlasting death and the number of either is so certain and definite it cannot be either increased or diminished.” This religious teaching would make God a respecter of persons. Yet Peter preached, “Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him” (Acts 10:34-35). If one is lost, then it is no fault of his own, but God is to be blamed! Imagine a God who would call upon man to obey Him (Mt. 7:21; Lk. 6:46), point out the blessings of obedience (Heb. 5:9), the curses of disobedience (2 Th. 1:7-9), make him in such a way that he cannot obey so as to be saved, and then punish him for disobeying! That’s not the God of the Bible! If the number of the saved is so certain and definite that it cannot be either increased or diminished, why did the Lord tell Moses, “Whosoever hath sinned against me, him will I blot out of my book” (Ex. 32:33)?

This teaching renders faith and works unnecessary. Ever read James 2?

3) *Faith Only Justification.*

Check this: “Wherefore that we are justified by faith only is a most wholesome doctrine and very full of comfort.” All we need is one passage of Scripture that says we are justified by faith only — just one. Where is it? The Scriptures do say that we are “... justified by faith...” (Rom. 5:1). Missing from the passage is “faith only,” “faith solely”, or “faith wholly.” A little more reading will reveal, “Much more then, being justified by his blood...” (Rom. 5:9). If we are justified by faith only, then you eliminate the blood of Christ! If you believe that we are justified by His blood, then you must wipe out the word “only.” You can’t have it both ways! Only one time do the words “faith only” appear in the Bible, and the Book of God says it’s not so — “Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only” (Jas. 2:24).

4) *Baptism Unnecessary For Salvation.* This is taught as fact: “The New Testament simply does not teach that baptism is necessary for salvation.” Have

you read these Scriptures: Matthew 28:19; Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38, 41; 8:12-13, 38; 9:18; 10:48; 16:15, 33; 18:8; 19:5; 22:16; Romans 6:3-4; 1 Corinthians 12:13; Galatians 3:27; 1 Peter 3:21? To the contrary, the New Testament does teach that baptism is necessary for salvation. If not, Jesus didn’t know it, it wasn’t revealed unto the apostles, disciples were unaware of it, and every person converted in the first-century did something that was wholly unnecessary for them to do. Why stop the chariot? Why be baptized the same day, the same hour? Men tell us baptism doth not save. God tell us “...baptism doth save” (1 Pet. 3:21). Whose word will you take?

5) *Sprinkling And Pouring In Place Of Immersion.* Folks are being made to believe: “Baptism may be administered by sprinkling, pouring or immersion, according to the choice of the applicant.” Where do you read such in the word of God? The New Testament uses the words “buried” (Rom. 6:4; Col. 2:12) and “planted” (Rom. 6:5) with reference to baptism. These words depict baptism. Suppose the funeral director disposed of one’s earthly remains by

sprinkling, pouring or burial, according to choice of the applicant! Or a farmer who worked by sprinkling, pouring or planting, according to the choice of the applicant! In Acts 8, do you find where Philip said to the treasurer, “Now Mr. Treasurer, how would you like for us to administer this today: sprinkling, pouring or burial — your choice”? No, “...they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him. And when they were come up out of the water...” (Acts 8:38-39). There is no clearer example depicting immersion.

6) *Once Saved, Always Saved.* It’s widely believed, “A Christian’s sins do not damn his soul. The way a Christian lives, what he says, his character, his conduct or his attitude toward other people have nothing whatsoever to do with the salvation of his soul. That is settled in Christ and Christ alone.” You would have to take a penknife to about all the word of God and cast it aside for this to be true. These passages put a FALSE next to this religious teaching: Acts 8:20-23; 1 Corinthians 10:12; 15:58; Ephesians 4:25-32; Titus 2:11-12; Revelation 2:10. Check the facts!

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